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## Pedagogical Approach to Developing the Hiring Practices of Higher Education Administrators

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# Pedagogical Approach to Developing the Hiring Practices of Higher Education Administrators

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*Most student affairs professionals will serve in a managerial and/or supervisory role at some point in their careers, yet we found only 11% of higher education graduate preparatory programs have required coursework focusing on this competency area. This situation is disconcerting, as there seems to be an assumption within the student affairs field that new professionals have the formal training and experiences needed to immediately be placed into these managerial and/or supervisory roles. In an effort to address this discrepancy, and in particular staffing practices, one higher education graduate preparatory program developed a course on staffing practices using an innovative pedagogical approach rooted in the theoretical framework of experiential learning. This approach enabled future student affairs professionals to apply theory-to-practice and develop the supervision skills they will need in their imminent careers. Recommendations are provided for faculty members, senior administrators, and a general calling for empirical research.*

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As large and complicated organizations, colleges and universities require significant numbers of administrative student affairs positions to facilitate their operation. As such, the importance of student affairs professionals to the academy and the operation of institutions within higher education cannot be understated. Beyond their immediate administrative functions, these professionals take on the following roles: “1) adviser, liaison, advocate, 2) counselor, assessor, conduct officer, 3) service provider, coordinator of programs, and 4) crisis manager, institutional preserver” (Barr, McClellan, & Sandeen, 2014). While their faculty counterparts cultivate student success within the classroom, these administrators play a central and parallel role to that of faculty, developing student success outside the classroom setting. According to Hamrick, Evans, and Schuh (2002) “with the new emphasis on an integrated approach to developing opportunities to foster student learning, student affairs has assumed a position of centrality and expertise in the educational process” (p. 128). Recognizing this elevated role of student affairs professionals in college students’ development and education, there is responsibility for the profession to ensure administrators are adequately prepared.

One of the most obvious areas administrators need formal training and continued professional development is in

supervision and management, sometimes referred to as hiring and staffing practices. While there is a plethora of positions administrators may hold (i.e. academic advising, managing residence halls, coordinating athletics and intramural sports, fundraising, tutoring and writing centers, etc.), a common responsibility will likely be serving as a manager and/or supervisor at some point in their career. For many, this responsibility will be thrust upon them immediately in their first professional position. Unfortunately, the ability to be an effective manager/supervisor does not come naturally to everyone, but rather, it must be intentionally learned and cultivated. There is a perception that if you have been supervised before, then you in turn know how to be a supervisor and that if you are a good employee, you must be a good supervisor. This is the same line of thought as professors not needing to learn to teach because they have observed their own faculty or that they were good students. However, as many professionals know all too well from personal experience, teaching, much like supervision, is not an inherent talent or skill.

While not all graduate preparation programs in student affairs are the same in terms of scope (some more theoretical, others more practical) and focus (administrative or counseling), most are designed to provide students with the requisite knowledge and

skills needed to develop into professionals who can meet the ever-growing challenges and needs of the contemporary college student (Long, 2012). Higher education and student affairs program faculty have the privilege and responsibility to craft curriculum and pedagogical practices to be inclusive, foster development of critical thinking, and provide the academic scaffolding needed to propel students into the student affairs profession. Since hiring and staffing practices are a common responsibility shared by jobs across functional areas within student affairs, it would stand to reason that the development of supervision and management skills would be included within most curricula of graduate preparation programs. This paper provides a cursory examination of the 201 higher education graduate preparatory programs compiled by the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) to determine the prominence of course requirements focused on management and supervision. In addition, an innovative pedagogical approach used within one of these graduate programs with a specific focus on the development of skills related to hiring and staffing practices of future administrators will be illustrated. Recommendations will be provided to graduate program faculty and leaders within higher education administration to further train and develop student affairs

professionals to be effective managers and supervisors.

### **Hiring and Staffing Practices**

Recognizing the importance professional staff have on the success of the university (Hamrick, et al., 2002; Ruben, 2010), effective hiring and staffing practices are critical. Conley, Powers, and Smith (2017) assert "...colleges and universities occupy a unique position within our society that requires them to go beyond effective human resource practices. As learning organizations, they must transcend the tenets of business and industry" (p. 75). To this end, it is apparent that the success of any organization is dependent upon successful hiring and staffing. Winston and Creamer (1997) reinforce this assertion and stress that effective hiring processes are critical as higher education is a reflection of the faculty and staff who shape it. Furthermore, they go on to argue that the most important role of student affairs professionals is the hiring, staffing, supervision, and development of administrators throughout the university. To this end, the intentional professional development of the supervision and management skills of student affairs professionals could be paramount to the success of student affairs and higher education institutions.

It can be argued administrators rely upon how they were taught to do something

(or simply observed it) rather than learning and applying the best practices established and reinforced through empirical research. There are many practices, such as hiring/staffing processes, where administrators may default to their own prior experiences, such as how they were previously interviewed and/or their experience serving on a search committee. Carroll (2014) finds this disconcerting and shares the concern that many supervisors are simply unprepared for this important role, as they assumed this role without formal training to do so effectively. This practice of higher education and student affairs is fundamentally flawed, as it assumes individuals can learn through observation alone. This is a great example of a managerial failure as it is a logical fallacy based on inadequate ideas (Bolman and Deal, 2013). The fact that institutions of higher education place the responsibility of securing the most expensive and important resource (the staff) of their organization on the shoulders of hiring managers that lack formal training is flawed at best and negligent at worst.

The authoritative source on staffing and hiring practices is the work of Winston and Creamer (1997). In their text, *Staffing and Hiring Practices in Student Affairs*, they outline and discuss the central components that future supervisors and managers must be aware of. Despite being the authoritative

text on this subject, it must be noted that a fundamental limitation of its use is the fact it is twenty years old at this point. While there are staples of hiring/staffing practices outlined that are timeless and true to this day, there is clearly a need to incorporate current trends and concerns in higher education (such as the Fair Labor Standards Act, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) rights, financial constraints of universities, and increasing demand for assessment and accountability).

Developing future higher education administrators in the best practices of hiring/staffing that are ethical, efficient, and effective should have a rippling impact on higher education. By improving the hiring/staffing practices, these administrators will strengthen our profession, which will transcend into the academic experience of students (Davenport, 2016). With that being said, it should come as no surprise that dissatisfaction with supervisors can lead to higher turnover rates of employees (Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, & Kacmar, 2007; Tepper, 2000; Tull; 2006). Coupling this turnover rate with the high attrition rate of higher education administrators due to low salaries, limited career mobility, geographic restrictions, and lack of professional respect from others within the academe (Bender, 2009; Lorden, 1998; Tull, 2006; Winston & Creamer, 1997) reinforces the need to develop future leaders

in the areas of management and supervision. The saturation of effective supervisors in higher education and student affairs has the potential to mitigate employee concerns and positively influence the attrition rate within the student affairs profession. Supporting this, Ruben (2010) asserts, "Perhaps more so than in many other organizations, the people who work in higher education determine the quality of the programs and services that can be offered" (p.57). Doing so can have a rippling impact throughout higher education, as it will not only strengthen the division of student affairs, but the university as a whole.

### **The Development and Training of Student Affairs Professionals**

Learning should be viewed as a lifelong process extending beyond the years student affairs professionals spend formally in their graduate coursework. Arguably, the greatest learning will come through professional experience as students will apply theory-to-practice and learn first-hand through their successes and failures in working in higher education administration. Graduate program faculty have the opportunity to establish the building blocks of these young professionals' journey as practitioners, but it is only the beginning of their development. With that being said, faculty and senior student affairs administrators should consider forming a

symbiotic partnership, in which both support one another, in this academic preparation.

This academic background should be coupled with professional development throughout the individual's career to make them most effective in their position. Recognizing the lifelong learning of these professionals, it is important for faculty and senior administrators to understand how adults learn (adult learning theory) and develop effective strategies for teaching these professionals in and out of the classroom (Brookfield, 1991; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 1998; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). In doing so, faculty will be able to intentionally shape the academic experience of these graduate programs to complement and be congruent with the learning that will continue long after these students graduate and enter the profession. At that point, the reins are turned over from the faculty to senior administrators who need to continue to foster this learning and professional development of their staff.

Faculty members in higher education and student affairs programs have the ability (and arguably the responsibility) to develop future leaders in their graduate preparatory programs. This growth is critical and should continue in their administrative positions through formal training and professional development within their functional areas. As Roberts (2007) reminds us, professional

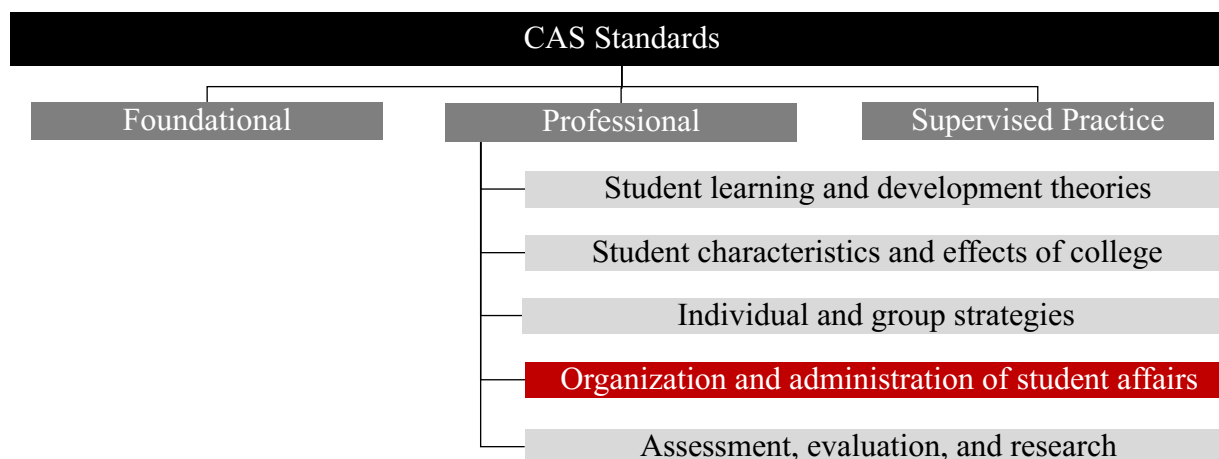
development (in and out of the classroom) is a foundation of student affairs practice within higher education. Ultimately, through this dialogue and professional development (and graduate preparatory programs), faculty have the ability to shape the next generation of leaders in higher education. As faculty within graduate preparatory programs, we recognize this is both a privilege and responsibility, and should not be taken lightly. There is the opportunity to establish an apprenticeship approach that is rooted in theory and best practices. It should be the goal of faculty to develop successful academic leaders. Our commitment to developing these principles in student affairs professionals will foster transformational leadership practices throughout our institutions. This commitment of higher education graduate preparatory faculty can be guided by the principles of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS).

### **Graduate Preparatory Programs and the CAS Standards**

Accreditation systems and academic guidelines are the foundation of the profession and guide the practices of scholar practitioners (McClintock, 2003). A guiding force in

graduate preparatory programs in higher education is the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). The CAS standards recommend “teaching approaches include active collaboration, service-learning, problem-based learning, community-based learning, experiential learning, and constructivist learning. Faculty members should use multiple teaching strategies” (CAS, 2012, p. 9). These pedagogical approaches are multimodal and align with adult learning theory (Knowles, et al., 1998). They are designed to provide an engaging experience for students that fosters the application of theory-to-practice. It is through application that students further develop their critical thinking skills and strengthen their practice.

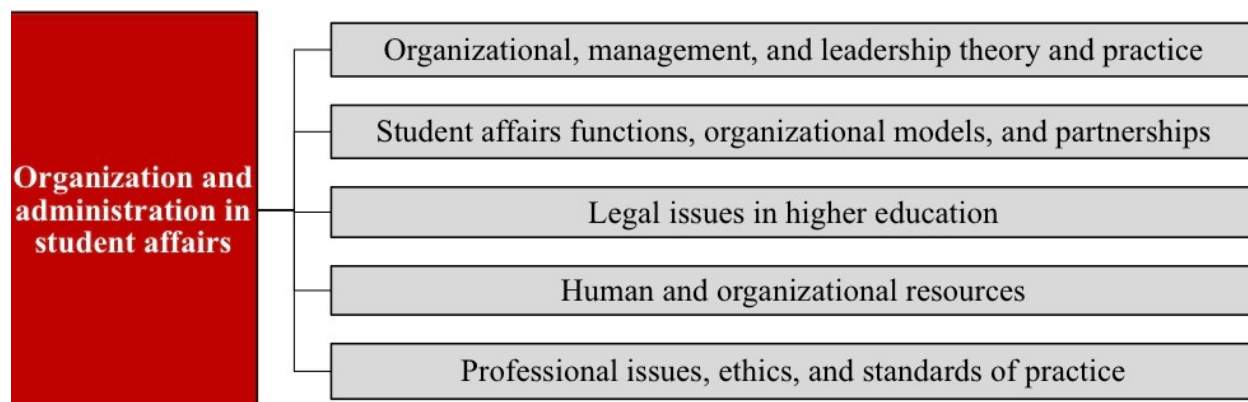
CAS (2012) recommends graduate preparatory programs in higher education address three content areas of study: 1) *foundational studies*, 2) *professional studies*, and 3) *supervised practice*. Of these areas, it is *professional studies* that is directly connected to supervision and management. *Professional studies* outlines five subcategories, of which ‘organization and administration of student affairs’ ties to management and supervision (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Overview of CAS Standards and subsection of Professional studies.**

Within this subcategory of *professional studies*, there is a call to “include studies of organizational, management, and leadership theory and practice; student affairs functions, organizational models, and partnerships;

legal issues in higher education; human and organizational resources; and professional issues, ethics, and standards of practice in the context of diverse institutional types” (CAS, 2012, p.13) (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Organization and Administration subsection of Professional Studies**

The inherent challenge in meeting and meaningfully adhering to the CAS Standards is the limited number of courses in graduate programs, which prohibits the inclusion of classes focusing exclusively on each of these components. Arguably, a program

could develop a dozen courses in this area of professional studies alone. While this would allow students to more deeply explore these topics, there simply is not the luxury of affording that many courses in a graduate program to one area. As noted above, there



are three primary content areas of study that programs strive to adhere to from the CAS Standards (*foundational studies, professional studies, and supervised practice*). Simply dividing the 12 courses equally between each of these three areas would result in only four courses being offered from each area in a typical 36-credit Master's degree program. Therein lies the challenge of program coordinators and faculty. Which of these areas warrants in-depth attention of the topic exclusively, and which courses can be combined and/or infused throughout the curriculum? It appears one such area being combined and/or infused is management and supervision.

### **Graduate Courses Focused on Management/Supervision**

An examination of the curriculum of 201 graduate programs in higher education/student affairs compiled on the ASHE website found 23 (11%) programs have a course requirement focusing exclusively on management/supervision. This cursory examination involved looking at the program of study for each graduate program and ascertaining if a course requirement was dedicated to management and supervision practices in higher education. The criteria for this categorization was identifying course titles clearly focusing on management or supervision. When available, course descriptions/syllabi were

reviewed to confirm these findings. While many of these 178 (89%) graduate preparatory programs without a management/supervision course likely blend the topic within other courses (i.e. organizational theory, leadership, administration, etc.), these courses cannot dig as deeply into management and supervision as they would if they focused exclusively on these topics.

It can be argued that inclusion of a course focusing exclusively on management and supervision is critical, as there is a need to develop higher education administrators to be strong(er) supervisors and managers (Ignelzi, 2013). While these new professionals from graduate programs will hold a plethora of roles and responsibilities, it is likely these roles and responsibilities will include supervision and/or management. Disconcertingly, Ignelzi (2013) asserts that "a troubling assumption among many student affairs supervisors on when learning ends for supervisees seems to be that learning ends with graduation from a student affairs graduate preparatory program" (p. 418). To this end, the higher education and student affairs profession often expects graduate preparatory programs to develop the supervision and management skills of graduate students, yet the findings from examining the graduate programs compiled by ASHE show only 11% of these programs accomplish this task. This illustrates a clear need for graduate

preparatory programs to focus on management and supervision practices within their curriculum and continued professional development throughout their career. There is a need to develop student affairs professionals to be active scholar practitioners, extending their learning beyond formal education. Professionals should view themselves as life-long learners who intentionally seek out professional development. This scholarly practice should be grounded in theory and research, include assessment and evaluation, and be driven by personal values, commitment, and ethical conduct (McClintock, 2003). In doing so, student affairs professionals will be able to build upon the foundation of the academic scaffolding they received in their graduate studies and continue to grow professionally (and address any deficits from their academic preparation). Acknowledging this, the formation of scholarly practice ought to begin in their graduate program, as that is a pivotal developmental period in which they begin to define who they are as a professional and develop into becoming a scholar practitioner.

### **Development of Management and Supervision Course**

As a profession, there is a clear need to develop and articulate widely the acceptable and unacceptable staffing practices in student affairs (Winston, Torres, Carpenter,

McIntire, & Petersen, 2001). Recognizing this inherent need to develop the management and supervision skills of future higher education administrators, we created and implemented a required graduate course in this area for a graduate program in Higher Education Leadership ('Management and Supervision') and paired it with an existing undergraduate course ('Foundations of Higher Education Leadership').

The 'Management and Supervision' course is a graduate level course introducing students to serving in a supervisory and managerial role within higher education and applies theory-to-practice of supervision and management practices (syllabi available at [www.tinyurl.com/Tolman-staffing](http://www.tinyurl.com/Tolman-staffing)). The inclusion of the hiring process in this 'Management and Supervision' course within the graduate program aims to strengthen the student affairs profession by instilling the best practices of hiring and staffing in future higher education administrators. This graduate course differentiates management vs. supervision, explores what good supervision looks like, applies leadership theories to management practices, and examines core processes to management and supervision (i.e. hiring practices, feedback and evaluations, communication, motivation and professional development, etc.). Despite the previously mentioned limitations and dated nature of the book, *Staffing and Hiring Practices in*

*Student Affairs* by Winston and Creamer (1997) was a tremendous resource in the development of the 'Management and Supervision' course. Within the course, students are responsible for chairing a mock search committee from start to finish. To enhance their experience and apply theory-to-practice, the course addresses the steps to effective recruitment and selection as outlined by Winston and Creamer (1997). At the heart of this course is the application of theory-to-practice. The course is rooted in the theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and focuses on group projects, role playing, and case studies. While the course includes several projects and pedagogical approaches, this paper highlights the marquee project that focuses on hiring and staffing practices. Content includes the best practices for supervising, recruitment and hiring practices, processes for providing formal feedback, and professional development. Topics are situated within the theoretical framework of student development, management, and leadership theories. The course includes experiential learning components.

The 'Foundations of Higher Education Leadership' course is an undergraduate course open to current seniors that introduces Higher Education Leadership as a professional area of study (syllabi available at [tinyurl.com/Tolman-staffing](https://tinyurl.com/Tolman-staffing)). It is designed to provide an overview of the

profession and takes a broad look at the essential work of university administrators. This is the foundational course for those contemplating pursuing careers in higher education as administrators and leaders. The course explores career paths and graduate programs in higher education administration, provides professional development, and offers resources for conducting future job searches. The intent of the course is to offer an overview of student affairs as a profession and stimulate student interest in exploring academic paths in pursuing careers in higher education administration.

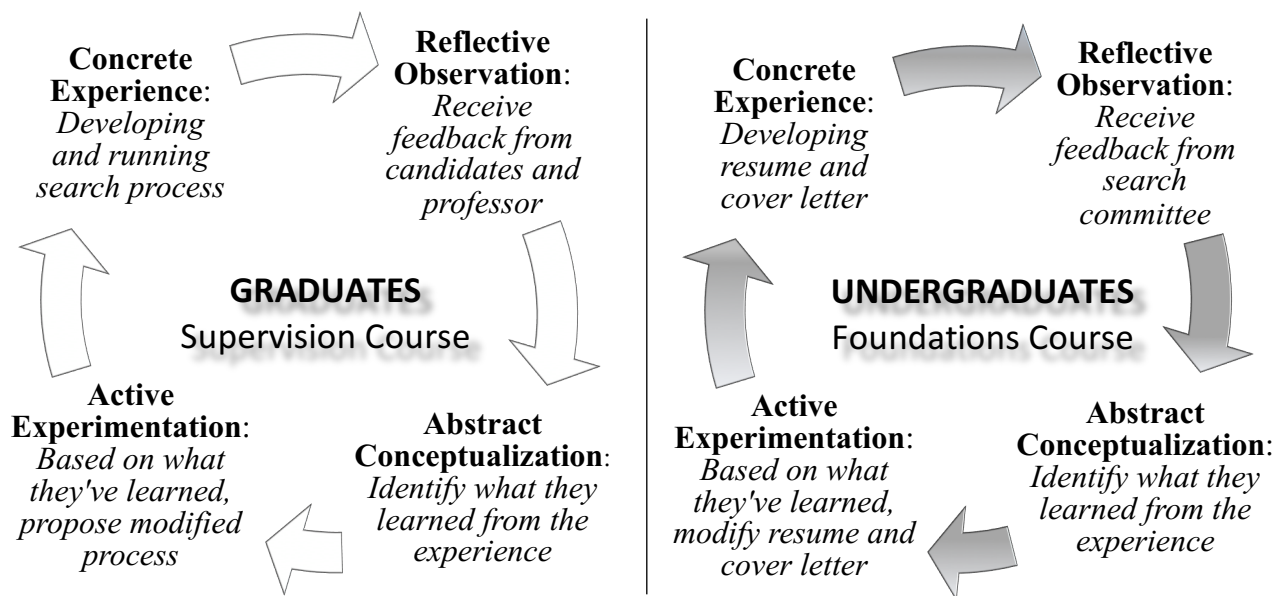
### **Theoretical Framework**

Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning is built upon the idea of learning through doing. It is a hands-on approach enabling students to learn through actually experiencing the subject at hand. This is powerful, as it fosters the application of theory-to-practice and in the reflection of doing so facilitates students to connect practice-to-theory. Kolb's experiential learning model has four components: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Figure 3). This model provided an excellent theoretical framework for designing the effective pedagogical approach for this course in supervision and management.

### Course Integration

In an effort to develop a hands-on approach to learning staffing practices, the two courses, 'Management & Supervision in Higher Education' and 'Foundations of Higher Education Leadership', were integrated for a shared class activity (Figure 3). This project involved undergraduate students within the Foundations course to apply and (mock) interview for a job in higher education administration that was being orchestrated by the graduate students in the

Management & Supervision course. This integration was a symbiotic relationship, as it gave undergraduate students the opportunity to better prepare for applying/interviewing for graduate/professional positions, which many of them will be doing as they embark on their imminent career in higher education. Conversely, it gave the graduate students practical, hands-on experience developing and chairing a search committee from start to finish.



**Figure 3. Course integration examined through the lens of experiential learning.**

### Application of Course Integration

The 'Management and Supervision' and 'Foundations of Higher Education Leadership' courses are offered in the spring semester in a 15-week, face-to-face format. Offering the course in the spring is ideal, as it takes place during the traditional

recruitment/hiring season in student affairs, when the major hiring conferences (NASPA, ACPA, OPE, etc.) take place in February and March. This allows students the opportunity to experience chairing a search committee around the challenges of time constraints of the spring semester, such as spring break,

end of the year banquets, etc. The timeline for the mock interview process is mid-February through late April (Table 1)

**Table 1. Timeline for mock interview process.**

	<b>Graduate Students</b>	<b>Undergraduate Students</b>
Week 1	Developing the job description	Resume and cover letter writing
Week 2	Developing recruitment & selection strategy	Peer review of resume/cover letter
Week 3	Developing rubric for screening resumes	Formal application to position
Week 4	Resume Screening	
Week 5	Resume Screening	
Week 6	Developing Phone Interview Questions	
Week 7	Phone Interviews	Phone Interviews
Week 8	Developing on-campus interview questions	
Week 9	“On-campus Interviews”	“On-campus Interviews”
Week 10	Call each candidate to offer feedback	Receive and give feedback
Week 11	Feedback and discussion on process	

### ***Management and Supervision course (graduate students)***

This experience afforded graduate students the opportunity to chair a search committee from start to finish. This began in the recruitment stage and concluded by offering the position to a candidate. This professional development provided intentional training to imminent student affairs professionals in an area that is often overlooked and assumed that professionals have competency in (despite not receiving formal training).

*Developing job description.* The graduate students are tasked with developing a job description for a fictitious entry level student affairs position. Prior to doing this, they examine existing job postings on higheredjobs.com. This leads to the conversation of best practices of what should be included and excluded in job descriptions and job postings. The class collectively develops the job description to be used/advertised to the undergraduate students.

*Creating marketing/recruitment strategy.* Students are challenged to develop a

marketing and recruitment strategy, which includes where the position will be posted, how they will ensure to recruit diverse and well qualified candidates, and the timeline for the search process.

*Resume Screening.* Students discuss the best practices for screening resumes and develop a rubric for screening. Students then collect the resumes, screen them, and note feedback on each resume to share with candidates.

*Interviews.* The graduate students schedule and conduct phone interviews and in-person interviews with all of the undergraduate students. Additionally, graduate students develop an interview itinerary for the “on-campus interview.” Throughout this process, the graduate students note feedback on how well the candidates interviewed, which is shared with the undergraduate students at the end of the process (for their professional development).

*Candidate Follow-up.* At the conclusion of interviewing (phone and in-person) the undergraduate students, the graduate students speak with each candidate to update them on the search process, share the decision (negotiating a job offer to one candidate, while letting others know they had not been selected), and provide feedback on their resume, phone interview, and in-person interview.

*Feedback.* The graduate students are provided direct feedback (anonymous evaluation forms) from the undergraduate students who shared their experiences/perceptions of being interviewed. This feedback includes how comfortable the candidate was made to feel, their opportunity to express their ability to do the job based on questions asked, attentiveness of the interviewers, etc. Additionally, the course instructor observes the in-person interviews and provides additional feedback.

### ***Foundation of Higher Education Leadership course (undergraduate students)***

The timing of this project for the undergraduate students was ideal, as the majority of them in the class were preparing to submit their applications and interview for both admission into graduate school and graduate/professional positions in student affairs.

*Resume and Cover Letter.* Students explore the best practices of developing their resume/cover letter and learn how to tailor it to applying for positions in student affairs. As they develop their materials, they are strongly encouraged to utilize the Office of Career Services and seek advice from current student affairs professionals. In-class activity includes peer review of resumes and cover letters. Students use their finalized documents to apply for the mock position. Class discussion includes comparing their

current resume to job positions/descriptions of the positions they would like to hold once they graduate from their Master's program. This facilitates the conversation of creating a professional development plan for each student to intentionally gain the experiences during their graduate program that will lead to them successfully positioning themselves for the role they would like to hold after graduate school.

*Phone and in-person interviews.* Students are phone interviewed and "brought to campus" for an in-person interview by graduate students in the Management and Supervision course. These interviews are formal and parallel the experience they will have when applying for positions in the future. This includes professional dress for the on-campus interview and follow-up communication with the search committee.

*Feedback for Search Committee.* The undergraduate students are asked to complete an evaluation to give the graduate students feedback about how it felt to be a candidate in their search process. This is done for both the phone and on-campus interview.

### **Outcome of Course Integration and Lessons Learned**

True to the theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), this hands-on approach enabled both the undergraduate and graduate

students to learn through experiencing the hiring process. The undergraduate students were able to gain practical experience and confidence in their ability to interview for student affairs positions. The graduate students gained not only the experience of chairing a search committee from start to finish, but had the opportunity to learn best practices of how to effectively hire staff. This was a meaningful process that extended beyond the typical medium of a textbook and lecture. Students were able to experience firsthand the hiring process, which will realistically parallel their imminent experiences as they apply for positions (undergraduates) and are tasked with serving on search committees (graduate students). Like most processes, this course integration was one of trial and error. To further strengthen this course integration and hiring process activity, there is room for improvement.

If possible, it would be greatly beneficial for the graduate students to be involved with an actual search process in addition to the mock process. Due to the size of the class (typically 20+), it is not realistic for them to be intimately involved with the search process and serve on the committee. Alternatively, it would be beneficial for them to attend the presentation of the candidates to the campus (if there is one) and meeting with the chair of the search committee. In meeting with the chair of the search committee, the

graduate students could (independently of the search committee) establish a hiring timeline, develop a rubric and screen candidate resumes (blind review), create interview questions, and determine the on-campus itinerary. This would ideally be done in parallel with an actual search process, which would allow the chair of the search committee to compare and contrast their decisions with how the graduate students would have done it (i.e. compare/contrast who the graduate students would have phone interviewed with who was actually selected by the search committee).

It would also be ideal to have more faculty members and seasoned higher education administrators observe this process and provide feedback to the students. This could include review of their developed materials (i.e. rubric, timeline, interview questions, etc.), being on the phone interviews, and attending the in-person interview. In doing so, this will give students even more constructive feedback.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

As faculty develop the next generation of scholar practitioners to take the reins of our profession, it is critical to provide graduate students with the academic and theoretical scaffolding needed to meet the ever-changing needs of the contemporary college student. Supporting this belief, Davenport

(2016) stresses that higher education administrators have potential to have the greatest impact on student development and that the strengths of any student affairs divisions are inextricably linked to the efforts and abilities of these professionals. This begins with the recruitment and staffing practices of our profession. However, it must be cautioned that while seeking qualified candidates who can excel in the job, this desire should be tempered with having realistic expectations that are sustainable. The leadership insights of Fullan (2001) stress “superhuman leaders also do us another disservice: they are role models who can never be emulated by large numbers” (pp. 1-2). In congruence with this notion, we must also remember that our profession is founded on growing and further developing young professionals. With that being said, our recruitment practices should keep in mind not only who is an excellent candidate, but also who has great potential and is likely to develop into the ideal candidate.

Faculty and senior administrators have the opportunity to instill these principles in early career higher education and student affairs professionals. This sentiment is shared by Ignelzi (2013) who stresses that graduate preparatory programs in higher education have a responsibility to educate and train students in the area of supervision. Recognizing this need, the innovative



pedagogy employed to integrate these two courses (Management/Supervision and Foundations of Higher Education) proved to be successful for both the undergraduate and graduate students involved. This pedagogical approach of using experiential learning to develop the hiring practices of (future) higher education administrators should be further explored empirically and replicated. Furthermore, it could extend beyond the classrooms of graduate preparatory programs and serve as a calling for additional professional development opportunities for current administrators in higher education.

### **Recommendations for Faculty of Graduate Preparatory Programs in Higher Education**

This calling to develop the management and supervision practices is not an attack on the CAS standards nor necessarily a proposal to change them. Graduate preparatory programs in higher education (and the CAS standards themselves) face the daunting challenge of requiring the necessary courses needed to build a strong foundation while balancing the number of credit hours required in the program. The desire of students to complete their graduate work in shorter time has pushed many programs to become 36 credits instead of the traditional 48. Program Coordinators are faced with the difficult task of what to put in and what to

leave out. Adhering to Newton's (1846) third law of motion, "*for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction,*" to require a course in management and supervision would require removing a course. To this end, faculty should challenge themselves to determine which courses cannot be added but are important, and work together as graduate programs and the profession to intentionally infuse this into professional development. In graduate programs, this can potentially be done by overlapping these concepts into existing courses. These shortcomings could be identified by graduate programs and communicated to the profession. Doing so could help leadership in higher education to promote professional development opportunities to address these areas.

Another option for program coordinators might be, if their programs have some degree of flexibility, to include a course directly addressing supervision and management be included as an elective. Since, as previously mentioned, graduate preparation programs tend to have different focuses (Long, 2012), it is not uncommon to have students chose between several courses beyond the core classes, to further explore areas of student affairs they wish to pursue. For example, one graduate program includes an optional course on teaching within the higher education setting, while another includes a course on the Community College.

While these topics are likely touched upon in core coursework, students with interests in these areas can elect to take specific classes that go into greater detail in a particular area (though likely at the expense of another course, but that would be the student's prerogative). So, for students who wish to go beyond what is covered in the core coursework regarding hiring and staffing practices, they could have the option to take a course dedicated to supervision and management.

Regardless of suggested options provided here, it is clear there is both a need and an opportunity for faculty and researchers to further examine the areas of management and supervision within student affairs. The existing literature within higher education administration are scant and out of date, and new empirical research could be used to establish best practices in graduate preparation and professional development related to hiring and staffing practices. Any new scholarship in this area could be best informed by a partnership between faculty and student affairs professionals. This scholarly partnership will likely yield a wealth of information that could then be used to develop the supervision and management practices of students in graduate programs and current administrators through professional development.

Ultimately, faculty have the opportunity to directly shape the future of higher

education through their teaching and research. Shushok and Perillo (2016) remind the profession of this responsibility by asserting that graduate preparatory programs in higher education are well positioned to develop students to view themselves as scholar-practitioners who will tackle the adaptive challenges faced by colleges and universities. As teacher-scholars, our research and teaching can inform one another, which in turn will strengthen our graduate programs and successfully help propel students into their imminent careers in higher education and student affairs.

### **Recommendations for Leaders in Higher Education**

It has been demonstrated that the effectiveness of any student affairs division is directly related to caliber of the professionals who serve the students (Sandeem & Barr, 2014). Recognizing the limited attention graduate preparatory programs in higher education can give to management and supervision, administrators in leadership positions must be cognizant of this. Intentional efforts should be given to create professional development opportunities for young professionals that teach best practices of management and supervision. This would ideally be an intentional and proactive approach, not a crash course that takes place just prior to or concurrent with these young professionals

serving in this role. Consideration may be given to using experiential learning as the theoretical underpinning of this professional development.

Furthermore, this professional development could be designed to include all professional staff, not just new professionals. Few professionals receive formal or extensive training on the processes (and theoretical underpinnings) of effective management and supervision. This includes the areas of recruitment, hiring, conflict resolution, coaching, employment legal issues, etc. Professionals often must rely upon their academic preparation from their graduate program (which has been shown to not focus on supervision/management practices) and learn by trial-and-error once in the position. Our inattention to providing ongoing professional development relating to management and supervision may be a result of the belief that since all professionals have all been managed/supervised by others, they should know how to do it. But have they been supervised well? Are those in leadership roles on our college campuses demonstrating and implementing the best practices of our profession? This assumption that individuals know how to supervise is flawed. It assumes those who managed/supervised these professionals were effective, knowledgeable,

and adhered to best practices. Simply because we have seen somebody else do it, does not mean we can do it ourselves without training. Anyone who has watched a professional golfer swing a golf club can attest that watching is very different than trying to do it yourself. With all skills, supervision or golf, individuals must learn the fundamentals and mechanics, and practice them regularly.

As leaders within higher education focus on developing their administrators to be strong(er) supervisors and managers, areas must be identified for regular and intentional professional development. Recognizing the limitation of most graduate preparatory programs in fully developing students in this area of supervision and management, institutions of higher education should be intentional in the professional development of their staff in these areas. However, this idea of professional development can be a “hard sell as something to take seriously for many student affairs practitioners who would rather simply worry about serving students and doing their jobs” (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007, p.279). To this end, there is a need to instill the core value of professional development into the career trajectory of all student affairs professionals, which should be viewed through the lens of their being scholar practitioners.

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